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paintings, one on farming prospects and a bibliography with sixty-five titles. He says that the conservation of moisture in the soil by means of deep plowing is proving successful in the cultivation of the dry lands.

**The Handbook of Nyasaland.** Comprising Historical, Statistical and General Information concerning the Nyasaland Protectorate. First year of publication. Compiled from official and other reliable sources. 292 pp. and illustrations. The Government Printer, Zomba, Nyasaland Protectorate, 1909. 3s. 6d.

A useful compilation including all phases of the development work in the Protectorate.

### ASIA

**L'Empire japonais et sa Vie économique.** Par Joseph Dautremere, Consul de France. 308 pp., map and illustrations. Librairie Orientale et Américaine. E. Guilmoto, Editeur. Paris, 1910. F. 6.

The two parts of the title correspond to the two principal divisions of the book. It contains, first, a brief outline of the geography of Japan, and, secondly, a survey of its economic resources and activities. Compiled from various official and unofficial sources by the hand of one who knows the country through personal acquaintance, it is a handy guide to the land of the rising sun for the student as well as the prospective trader. One must beware, however, of too readily adopting the author's patronizing attitude towards modern progress in Japan, which betrays the tourist's way of looking at things rather than that of the scholar, the traveler, the philosopher, who tries to understand, and account for, what seems foreign to him. Nations ought to be judged by their aims and ideals, as embodied in their best men, quite as much as by the discrepancy, often ridiculous, between them and the crowd behind the leaders. A Japanese traveling in France, or in any other of the western countries, might make there, eventually, some observations quite as startling as the author records of Japan.

M. K. G.

### NEAR EAST

**Kairo—Bagdad—Konstantinopel.** Wanderungen und Stimmungen von E. v. Hoffmeister, General-leutnant z. D. x and 262 pp., illustrations and map. B. G. Teubner, Leipzig, 1910. M. 8.

The author, a retired German army-officer, has traveled extensively in many parts of the nearer East, some of which are rarely visited by travelers; and he has also supplemented his travels by collateral studies. With his heart full of his favorite subject we can understand that he could not help speaking about it in public, and many a reader of the magazine in which he published his earlier articles certainly has thanked him for a pleasant hour of reading. But it is a pity that successes of this kind too often lead a writer to overestimate his literary and scientific abilities. To write up "the Past and Present of the nature and the people of the Orient," as the author attempts in this book, and to "develop his report into a philosophy of travel," by interweaving it with his personal impressions and reflections, is more than the amateur can ever hope to accomplish. Hence, measured by the ambition of the author, the book is a perfect failure; for the first part of his book he lacks the qualities of the geographer and the historian, and for the latter those of the philosopher. He is a pleasant

elderly gentleman to whose interesting talks we like to listen, but to whom scientific standards and points of view are entirely foreign. Nothing can, perhaps, illustrate this better than the fact that of the 157 pictures, many of them very good, more than two-thirds are inserted without any indication of what they represent, so that one must look up the index to inform himself about their subjects. The fundamental difference between scientific and amateur work shows nowhere better than in the chapter on the Bagdad Railroad, on which, as a former member of the German army, the author can speak as an expert. That part of his book is really valuable; but the rest is simply a series of pictures and adventures which succeed each other like so many pearls on a string, and of would-be aphorisms which hardly ever rise above the level of commonplace.

M. K. G.

### AUSTRALASIA AND POLYNESIA

**The Year-Book of Australia, 1910.** lvi and 781 pp., 5 maps and index. 8vo. Gordon & Gotch, London, 1910. 10s. 6d.

Published under the auspices of the governments of the Commonwealth and States. It is the official record of the statistics, governmental departments, institutions, conditions and progress of Australia.

**Wanderings Among South Sea Savages.** By H. Wilfred Walker. xvi and 254 pp. 48 plates from photographs and index. Witherby & Co., London, 1910. 7s. 6d.

These are interesting chapters of experiences in Fiji, British New Guinea, Luzon and Borneo; and they are all the more interesting because they are a by-product of the author's serious pursuits as an ornithologist. It will, therefore, be understood that he does not pretend to be a geographer or an ethnologist. He writes of the things that interested him with a confidence that they will interest the readers who feel an attraction to his volume. Thus it comes to pass that he has given a valuable account of his experiences with the Negritos of Luzon and that he has given the best description anywhere in print of the Borneo caves where the birds build their nests for a Chinese soup.

In New Guinea he was particularly fortunate in being able to join a punitive expedition directed against the Dobudura in the interior of the north coast of the possession, a tribe never before visited by white men. There was some hard fighting and the constant excitement of a jungle scouting expedition for wild cannibals. The author enjoyed it all and has given us a narrative which must stand as the beginning of geographical acquaintance with that part of New Guinea. He broke new ground in another direction in the same region; he penetrated inland from Cape Nelson to the swamp-bordered lake in which the Agai Ambu (Seligmann names them Agaiambo) live in houses set on piles and lead a life so aquatic that it was long believed that they were web-footed. Mr. Walker somewhat regretfully disposes of this myth, for he says that they are not web-footed, although he observes "between the toes an epidermal growth more distinct than in the case of other peoples."

The governor of the possession, Sir Francis Winter, who followed Mr. Walker on a visit to the lake people, says nothing about the web or the epidermal growth. Both authorities agree on the statement that the Agaiambo walk so rarely on the ground that they cannot do it properly and their feet bleed when they attempt it.